DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 105 516 CS 202 047

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Hoetker, James |
| TITLE | Theater Games: One Way into Drama. |
| INSTITUTION | ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.; National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Ill. |
| SPONS AGENCY | National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. |
| PUB DATE | Apr 75 |
| CONTRACT | NEC-0-72-4636 |
| NOTE | 31p.; Theory into Practice (TIP) Series |
| AVAILABLE FROM | National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (Stock No. 38612, $1.10 non-member, $1.00 member) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 PLUS POSTAGE |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Class Activities; Creative Activities; *Creative Dramatics; Dramatics; *Educational Games; Elementary Secondary Education; English Instruction; Language Arts; Teacher Education; Teaching Methods; *Theater Arts |
| IDENTIFIERS | Spolin (Viola) |

ABSTRACT

Although drama should be a central, indispensable activity not only in language arts programs but in college and university programs preparing teachers of language arts and reading, few teachers have had opportunities for the workshop and theater experiences that would enable them to introduce their students to the world of drama. This booklet suggests resources that are rich and detailed enough to enable any teacher to learn drama while teaching it. The primary focus is on Viola Spolin's "Improvisation for the Theater," which sets out a structured sequence of dramatic activities--theater games--designed to prepare students of any age to act on the stage. A number of theater games, many of them Spolin's are described so the reader may get an idea of their nature and their possible uses. (TO)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED 105 516

CS 201 211

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

# Theater Games:

## One Way Into Drama

**James Hoetker**
**Florida State University**

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills
National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801

NCTE EDITORIAL BOARD Charles R. Cooper, Richard Corbin, Bernice Cullinan, Richard Lloyd-Jones, Owen Thomas, Robert F. Hogan, *ex officio*, Paul O'Dea, *ex officio*

Published April 1975

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills
and
National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801

Printed in the United States of America

NCTE Stock Number 38612

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgment in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the National Council of Teachers of English for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the National Council of Teachers of English or the National Institute of Education.

# Foreword

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) is a national information system developed by the U.S. Office of Education and now sponsored by the National Institute of Education. It provides ready access to descriptions of exemplary programs, research and development efforts, and related information useful in developing more effective educational programs.

Through its network of specialized centers or clearinghouses, each of which is responsible for a particular educational area, ERIC acquires, evaluates, abstracts, indexes, and lists current significant information in its reference publications.

The ERIC system has already made available—through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service—much informative data, including all federally funded research reports since 1956. However, if the findings of specific educational research are to be intelligible to teachers and applicable to teaching, considerable bodies of data must be reevaluated, focused, translated, and molded into an essentially different context. Rather than resting at the point of making research reports readily accessible, NIE has directed the separate ERIC Clearinghouses to commission from recognized authorities information analysis papers in specific areas.

In addition, as with all federal educational information efforts, ERIC has as one of its primary goals bridging the gap between educational theory and actual classroom practices. One method of achieving that goal is the development by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) of a series of sharply focused booklets based on concrete educational needs. Each booklet provides teachers with the best educational theory and/or research on a limited topic. It also presents descriptions of classroom activities which are related to the described theory and assists the teacher in putting this theory into practice.

This idea is not unique. Nor is the series title: *Theory Into Practice* (TIP). Several educational journals and many commercial textbooks provide teachers with similar aids. The ERIC/RCS booklets are unusual in their sharp focus on an educational need and their blend of sound academic theory with tested classroom practices. And they have been developed because of the increasing requests from teachers to provide this kind of service.

Topics for these booklets are recommended by the ERIC/RCS National Advisory Committee. Suggestions for topics to be considered by the Committee should be directed to the Clearinghouse.

Bernard O'Donnell
Director, ERIC/RCS

Drama is almost anything that gets kids up off their passive fannies and engages them actively in working out ways to express their own feelings, responses, perceptions, attitudes and ideas.

James Hoetker, "Drama in the English Class"

Drama . . . is a way of education in the fullest sense; it is a way of living and, as such, aids rather than interferes with other study and achievement.

Brian Way, *Development through Drama*

I would like to argue . . . that drama and speech are central to a language curriculum, not peripheral. They are the base and essence, not specialities. I see drama as the matrix of all language activities, subsuming speech and engendering the varieties of writing and reading.

James Moffett, *Drama: What is Happening*

# Theory

To judge from the prominence it has assumed in recent professional books and journals, on the programs at professional meetings, and in publishers' displays, creative drama has become a major topic of interest among language arts teachers. I think this is a good thing, but it will not be my concern here to dwell on why I think it is a good thing or to try to explain why drama is currently attracting so much attention. Both have been done well elsewhere.

Suffice it to say that I strongly believe that drama should be a central, indispensable activity not only in language arts programs in the schools, but in college and university programs preparing teachers of language arts and reading. We are, of course, a long way from that state of affairs, primarily because drama represents such a radical departure from the time-honored (or dishonored) practices of English and language arts teachers. Drama, for example, drastically alters teacher and pupil roles, introducing a completely new set of rules for, to use Arno Bellack's term, "the language game of teaching." It is noncompetitive; it is unconcerned with correct answers; it encourages imagination and invention and devalues memorization and intellection; it deals with the present, rather than the past; and so on. Very few teachers have had opportunities for the workshop and theater experiences that would enable them to shift comfortably to playing the teaching game according to this new set of rules. Few teacher trainers, similarly, have had the experience to help their students prepare for handling a dramatic pedagogy.

The teacher or professor who wishes to try out drama, because descriptions of its virtues are convincing or simply because it is new and fashionable, may go into his classroom armed with what he has learned from a few books or articles or picked up in a couple of workshops at a convention or in-service program. And he may shortly find himself with an excited—or at least interested—class and with no answer to the desperate question, "What do I do next?" Understandably, he will be sorely tempted to retreat behind the desk and the textbook and pull the warm cloak of authority around his shoulders. ("Drama? Yeah, well, I tried it but the kids didn't respond.")

But that does not necessarily have to happen. There are resources available that are rich and detailed enough to enable any teacher to learn drama by doing it. One of the purposes of this booklet is to introduce the reader to what I have found to be one of the very best of these resources, in the hope of encouraging the use of drama while at the same time reducing the number of abortive attempts at it.

A second purpose of the paper, which I want to dispose of first, is more general. It has to do with distinguishing types of drama that are suitable for classroom use by a language arts teacher from those that are unsuitable. To a large extent, the distinctions are based on theories and motives, rather than on specific practices. For it is undoubtedly true that an uninformed person entering a hall where a group is engaged in dramatic work—warm-up exercises, role-playing, games, pantomimes, sensory awareness exercises, scene improvisations, or whatever—will often have a hard time deciding whether what is happening goes by the name of creative dramatics or role-playing or sensitivity-training or the Stanislavski Method or sociodrama or by one of several dozen other names applied to various dramatic approaches to training, therapy, or personal development.

This is hardly surprising. All forms of drama share common historical roots, most drama leaders share common assumptions about human nature (roughly Rousseauvian ones), and the different schools of drama are constantly borrowing from and cross-fertilizing one another. Still, there are basic differences that are pedagogically of the utmost importance.

Most vital is the distinction—albeit a rough-hewn one—between approaches to drama that are objective and privatistic and those that are mentalistic (or even mystical) and revelatory. Theorists and teachers of the former persuasion are concerned with enlarging and refining the student's behavioral repertory by teaching him something that can best be taught through dramatic experiences, for instance, the conventions of the theater itself. They are, like their arch-foes the behavioral psychologists, interested only in what the student *does*, and not at all in his thoughts or feelings or motives for doing it. Such teachers may, in fact, actively discourage students from talking about what goes on inside their heads. Such talk is just a distraction. What counts is what one communicates by what one does.

Theorists and teachers of the latter persuasion, on the other hand, set out to change the student's character or personality (and hence his behavior) by rearranging his psychic innards. They work directly toward, and by means of, the revelation and exposure of the student's mental life in and to the group.

Teachers of both persuasions, it should be made clear, share the belief that real, authentic, intuitive learning is possible only after a person has been cleansed of inhibitions and preconceptions imposed on him by others and maintained by socially conditioned unconscious defense mechanisms (vocabularies differ but the idea's the same). The objective drama teacher, however, proceeds on the assumption that the liberating process is a personal and private one, the details of which are nobody's business, except insofar as they are observable in changed behavior. The liberating process, these teachers believe, is an inevitable concomitant of one's seriously engaging in solving the problems set him by the dramatic process. The mentalistic drama teacher, on the contrary, strives to externalize the process of discovery and change and to deal with it directly and publicly.

To put it another way, the objective drama teacher is primarily concerned with substantive learning and trusts that the process of learning through drama will have desirable developmental side-effects. The mentalistic drama teacher reverses these emphases, concentrating on personal development goals and trusting that some important objective learnings will take place along the way.

It is my conviction—call it a prejudice, if you will—that there is a very important place in education for objective drama, but very little place at all for the sorts of mentalistic drama that aspire toward therapy or prophylaxis or consciousness-raising. I have argued this point at length in an essay on drama in the English class in Alan Purves's *How Porcupines Make Love* (Xerox, 1972) and will have to content myself here with a dogmatic statement of my conclusions.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to tell how objective or mentalistic a system of drama is by the label its practitioners place on it. Some group-trainers are as objective as anyone could wish, while some teachers of creative dramatics sincerely believe they are helping to save the world by improving its children, and so are not at all disinclined to muck around inside the heads of their little charges. So let me just say this and leave it: No student's inner life is anyone else's business at all, except to the extent that the student *freely* chooses to share it, at a time and under conditions of his or her own choosing—and these latter conditions do not apply in a dramatic group situation, with its peculiarly seductive and compelling dynamics. This should be a principle to which all educators subscribe.

It is first of all because of her dedication to this principle that I have been attracted to, and have chosen to recommend, Viola Spolin's system of theater games as described in *Improvisation for the Theater* (Northwestern University Press, 1967). But a second and equally important reason for the recommendation is that Spolin's

*presentation* of her system is more thorough, more complete, clearer, better organized, and more practically follow-able than any other presentation with which I am familiar. I know people who have built careers in professional children's theater on the system in Spolin's book, without ever meeting its author. It should serve equally well to get teachers enough into drama to learn how to use it in the classroom.

*Improvisation for the Theater* sets out a structured sequence of dramatic exercises and activities—theater games—designed to prepare students of any age to act on the stage. The system had its origins in the author's work with children's games in Chicago settlement houses and has reached its fullest artistic development in the improvisational theater companies directed by her son, Paul Sills. Although Spolin did not design her system for use in classrooms, and, apparently, during the process of its development had little interest in the applications of her games to teaching in formal classroom settings, there has been an increasingly widespread use of theater games techniques in schools, particularly in California, where the State Board of Education has recommended their use and where a Spolin Theater Game Center is engaged in teacher-training (see Additional Sources and References).

Teachers should welcome Spolin's book because it is explicitly an instructional system, as opposed to a book "about" educational drama. English teachers should find it especially congenial and adaptable to their needs because, as a system intended to teach the art of theater, it is concerned at some point with almost everything traditionally included in the English curriculum.

The greater part of the book is devoted to descriptions of some 220 theater games, arranged in order of complexity or difficulty and variously cross-referenced. A description of one rather simple game follows; the format is the typical one, the practical usefulness of which is immediately apparent.

**Gibberish #2—Past Incident** (from pages 123 and 124 of *Improvisation for the Theater**)

Two players.

Players on stage. Using gibberish, A tells B of a past incident (such as a fight he was in or a trip to the dentist). B then tells A something that happened to him, also using gibberish.

*Point of Concentration:* on communication to each other.

*Permission to reprint this activity and others throughout this booklet was graciously granted by Viola Spolin through her lawyer, Samuel W. Murdoch.

*Evaluation*

Ask A what B told him. Then ask B what A told him. (Neither player must *assume* what the other has related, since B's assumptions will not help A to make the clear communication necessary for solving the problem.) Ask the audience what was communicated to them.

*Points of Observation*

1. To avoid preliminary discussion, the two players should be picked at random just prior to going on stage.
2. This exercise should be repeated at intervals throughout training.
3. When this exercise is first played, students will act out (tell) their incident in great detail. If relating a visit to the dentist's office, for instance, they will hold their jaw, open their mouth wide, poke at their teeth, groan, etc. When the exercise is redone after months of workshop, however, the integration of sound and physical expression will be most subtly communicated. The players will be able to communicate the same events with a shrug of the shoulders or a slight dilation of the nostrils or a wiggle of the foot. They will be able to show, not tell.

A first, brief section of *Improvisation for the Theater* deals with the "theory and foundation" of theater games. Spolin begins with the ideas—which I think it is fair to say she shares with most other advocates of dramatic pedagogy—that children are inherently equal in their capacity to learn, that the great impediment to learning in most formal situations is the neglect or suppression of intuition and spontaneity ("only when a person functions beyond a constricted intellectual plane [is] he . . . truly open for learning"), and that drama is a "way . . . to get to intuitive knowledge."

*Improvisation for the Theater* is intended as a "charted course of activity" for providing the necessary conditions for intuitive learning; these conditions are "an environment in which experiencing can take place, a person free to experience, and an activity that brings about spontaneity."

The basic pattern for these conditions is the game, play-within-agreed-on-rules being an exciting and "natural group form providing the involvement and personal freedom necessary for experiencing." A Point of Concentration establishes the goal or objective on which players of an improvisational game are to focus. The structure, or rules, for a particular playing of a game are given by the players agreeing on a Where (an environment), a Who (the people within the Where), and a What (an activity or reason for being within the Where).

Only the Where and Who and What of a game are to be pre-planned. (Spolin's insistence on this crucially differentiates her system from most others.) The "plot" or story is to be created spontaneously—discovered—by the players as they endeavor cooperatively to solve the problem—reach the goal—without violating the agreed-on rules. Pre-planning of the way the game will go is not to be allowed, for the same reasons that the fixing of a ball game is not to be allowed—the pre-planning would take away the elements of spontaneity and surprise and, thereby, the point of the whole game.

The moment of spontaneity, says Spolin, "is the moment when we are free to relate and act, involving ourselves in the moving, changing world about us. . . . the moment frees us from handed-down frames of reference, memory choked with old facts and information and undigested theories and techniques of other people's finding." To make the moment of spontaneity possible, all traces of authoritarianism must be absent from the workshop environment.

My experience has been that some teachers who try to use Spolin's games in their classrooms have trouble establishing the right sort of classroom environment because they misunderstand or overgeneralize Spolin's remarks about the necessity of eliminating authoritarianism. And, a closely related difficulty, they do not fully take advantage of the system's power to promote student learning because they ignore or perhaps overrule her insistence that pre-planning "story-telling" and "playwriting" not be permitted in the course of an improvisational game.

The point of the whole system is to make possible spontaneous learning. Spontaneity and authoritarianism are incompatible. But the absence of authoritarianism emphatically does not mean the absence of discipline or control. Quite the contrary, in fact: discipline of a very rigorous sort is as necessary to playing an improvisational game as it is to playing any other game. The teacher cannot allow a player to sabotage a game by ignoring the rules or refusing to play his position. Like a coach, he must insist that each player play the game seriously or not play it at all. Beyond this, however, if the system is to work, self-discipline, a willing acceptance of the problem-to-be-solved—and not anyone's position of power or force of personality—must compel attention to the work at hand.

"Authoritarianism [is] imposing one's own experiences, one's own frame of reference, and behavior patterns upon another"; it is the "denial of self-experience to another." The teacher who withdraws his own authority but mistakenly accepts the clownish or egocentric behavior of a student is simply allowing the student illegitimately to substitute his own authoritarianism for the teacher's.

Teachers also sometimes find it hard to understand Spolin's insistence that authoritarianism can take the form of approval and helpful comments and suggestions. *Judgments of any sort create competitiveness.* And competition gives rise to exhibitionism at the one extreme and frustrated withdrawal at the other, thus inhibiting the spontaneity the whole approach tries to foster. A teacher's well-meant suggestions and examples, about, say, the content of an improvisation are similarly inhibiting, in that they represent the imposition of one person's frame of reference on another. Teachers are, by nature and training, great givers of advice and explainers, but these behaviors are counterproductive in a drama workshop and must be suppressed.

The place of language in a theater games workshop is deliberately very restricted. Spolin's insistence on the nonverbal nature of her system is expressed in her use of the term "physicalization" to describe the way the material is presented to students. Her stress on the objectively observable is (and this has been noted before, but it is of the most basic importance) positively behavioristic: "Show, don't tell!" The teacher should be not at all concerned about the beliefs or feelings of the student-actor.

> We should be interested only in his direct physical communication; his feelings are personal to him. . . . [Be] assured that insisting upon this objective (physical) relationship with the art form brings clearer sight and greater vitality to the student-actors. For the energy bound up in the fear of exposure is freed (and no more secretive) as the student intuitively comes to realize no one is peeping at his private life and no one cares where he buried the body. (p. 16)

Spolin's convictions are translated into workshop practice by (1) presenting each game as a problem to be solved; (2) identifying for each problem a Point of Concentration; (3) keeping the players' "eyes on the ball" during the game by side-coaching; and (4) evaluating in group discussion, after the problem has been solved, the process of its solution, and calling to the group's attention certain crucial "points of observation." All these elements are present in the description of the following rather advanced game.

**Give and Take** (from pages 230-231 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

Two or more players (two preferred).

Where, Who, What, time, weather, etc., agreed upon. Scene is played. Side coaching is used throughout scene. As the teacher-director calls out to the players, they are to respond accordingly.

*Side Coaching.* Give! Take! Give and take!

*Point of Concentration*: to be attentive to the side coaching and give the total focus to the other player, or take focus from him, or give and take where required.

*Evaluation*

To actors: Did you feel a rise in energy when directed? Did the problem (material in the scene) between you become more intense?

To audience: Were the human relations sharper? Did tension in terms of the scene appear? Were character traits developed? Did the scene maintain a complete improvisational development? (Scene-building must come through immediate involvement and not through outside plot or story.)

To total group: did you experience true improvisation?

*Points of Observation*

1. Some players keep abruptly changing character tone throughout this exercise and become more permissive on give and very aggressive on take. This is not necessary for solving the basic structure, since all we are after is giving the focus or intensity to each other and taking the focus from each other. Therefore it should be noted whether or not the expression of emotion shown grew out of the problem or merely was stuck on the scene at the moment of give and take. However, any emotional changes that come about genuinely through the give and take should be discussed, since physical intensity will produce emotional changes in a character. In fact, this exercise often produces strong character traits as a result of intensity with focus on each other.
2. If actors still appear isolated or are still using outside devices to move scenes—if they show little stage energy—then the teacher has given this problem too early.

Spolin's comments on the four key elements of her system—and a few of her "Reminders and Pointers" about workshop procedure—deserve brief attention here, before we move on to the presentation of additional examples of theater games.

*Problem-solving*. "In its simplest terms [the system consists of] *giving problems to solve problems*." This approach "does away with the need for the teacher to analyze, intellectualize, direct a student's work." "Mutual involvement with the problem instead of each other frees the air of personalities, judgment values, recriminations, fawning, etc." The teacher's responsibility is to diagnose what the students need and bring in fresh acting problems to solve their difficulties.

*Point of Concentration.* "The Point of Concentration is the focal point of the system. . . , it does the work for the student. It is the 'ball' with which all play the game." The Point of Concentration has four uses: it isolates segments of complex problems; it gives control to creativity in improvisation; it provides a common focus for all the players trying to solve a problem; it frees the student for spontaneous action.

Resistance to the Point of Concentration—avoidance of the problem—makes improvisation impossible and creates discipline problems. Resistance is shown most commonly in clowning, verbal wit, jokes, and what Spolin calls "playwriting," the authoritarian imposing of one student's own plot-ideas or frame of reference on the group. Many teachers I have observed tend mistakenly to encourage cleverness and the creation of "well-made" plots and punch lines, perhaps due to their importing inappropriate "literary" values into the workshop situation. But playwriting—like pre-planning—subverts the whole purpose of the game, which is to make intuitive learnings possible; the teacher must discourage it.

*Side Coaching.* This is Spolin's method for, among other things, discouraging playwriting and keeping the students' attention to the Point of Concentration. The teacher, during the course of the improvisation, will simply tell the students what she perceives they need to be told. ("You just walked through a table!" "No playwriting!" "Stay with the problem!") The student is to listen to the teacher's voice but pay no attention to it—heed, but not acknowledge. Side-coaching is not easy for a teacher to learn; despite the usefulness of the side-coaching suggestions given in most of Spolin's exercises, the most effective side-coaching, like all good improvisation, is spontaneous. The student, too, who has been well-trained to show he is paying attention when the teacher speaks, will have some difficulty learning how to keep on going while acknowledging *in his behavior* that he has understood the side-coaching.

*Evaluation.* Spolin's system shares with most other systems of drama an emphasis on the importance of discussion and evaluation after an improvisation has been completed. The evaluation session has a number of functions in Spolin's system; one of the most important functions is to reinforce the student's awareness that he need have no fear of judgments being made on him, since the stress is on objectivity, on reporting what one has seen or had communicated to him. The student audience (and the teacher, too) "are there to evaluate the acting problem presented and not a performance of a scene"; assumptions and interpretations of any sort are out of place. This point of view, again, seems difficult for many teachers to assume, so deeply ingrained is their allegiance to formal literary or theatrical values.

The games that follow should help to make all these terms clearer. *Reminders and Pointers.* Spolin includes 96 of these, of varying degrees of generality and importance, and in no particular order, on pages 36 through 46 of *Improvisation for the Theater.* The following are among the most important for our present purposes.

2. Interpretation and assumption keep the player from direct communication. This is why we say *show*, don't *tell.* Telling is verbally or in some other indirect way indicating what one is doing. This then puts the work upon the audience or the fellow actor, and the student learns nothing. Showing means direct contact and direct communication. It does not mean passively pointing to something.

10. If during workshop sessions students become restless and static in their work, it is a danger sign. Refreshment and a new focus is needed. End the problem immediately and use some simple warm-up (object) exercise or game. Skip around the handbook and use anything that will keep up the vitality level of the group. Just be careful not to use any advanced exercises until the group is ready for them. Be certain that Orientation and Where exercises are given students in the beginning work, however. This is as true for the professional company as it is for the lay actor and newcomer to the theater.

19. The teacher-director must be careful to always stay with the POC (Point of Concentration). The tendency to discuss character, scene, etc., critically and psychologically is often difficult to stop. The POC keeps both the teacher and the student from wandering too far afield.
"Did he solve the problem?"
"He was good."
"But did he solve the problem?"

25. Watch for excessive activity in early sessions of workshop; discourage all performing, all cleverness. Students with previous training, natural leadership, or special talent will often ignore the POC just as the fearful one will resist it. Keep everyone's attention focused on the problem at all times. This discipline will bring the timid ones to fuller awareness and channel the freer ones towards greater personal development.

33. Warm-ups should be used before, during, and after workshop sessions when necessary. They are brief acting exercises that refresh the student as well as catering to particular needs as seen by the teacher-director during each session.

36. The teacher-director must learn to know when the student-actor is actually experiencing, or little will be gained by the acting problems. Ask him!

57. Some students find it very difficult to keep from "writing a play." They remain separate from the group and never interrelate. Their withdrawal blocks progress during the group-planning sessions and while working onstage. They do not enter into relationships but manipulate their fellow students and the stage environment for their own purposes. This "playwriting" within the group violates the group agreement, prevents process with the other players, and keeps the user from achieving an expanding creative experience of his own. Playwriting is not scene improvisation. Scene improvisation can only evolve out of group agreement and playing. If playwriting continues as the session progresses, the players do not understand the POC. Sometimes a whole group, not understanding this point, will all be playwriting.

81. It takes courage to move out into the new, the unknown.

# Practice

A number of typical theatre games are described in the following pages, so that the reader may get a clearer idea of their nature and range and their possible uses. The games are arranged in three sections: Orientation Games, Improvisational Games, and Classroom Application. (Spolin's categorizations of her games are too complex to be fairly represented in a few pages. She, for instance, groups games under such headings as Acting with the Whole Body, Non-Directional Blocking, Developing Materials for Situations, Emotion, and so on.)

Only some of the games—along with Spolin's comments on them—are reproduced verbatim. To save space, some of the descriptions are abbreviated or paraphrased. Some of the games are borrowed or adapted from other writers. And a few go beyond or outside of Spolin's concerns to show how one may build out from her system.

## Orientation Games

> Orientation is not to be looked upon as a mere introductory or "getting acquainted" process. It is, instead, the first step in creating reality set before the student-actor; and, as such, it has significant value for the beginner. Indeed, student-actors who do not receive a proper Orientation are generally much slower to grasp the subsequent acting problems. (*Improvisation for the Theater*, page 49)

Among the functions served by the orientation sessions are these: they establish the problem-solving approach and familiarize the student with Point of Concentration; they establish group agreement and the necessity of cooperative problem-solving; they begin to break the student's dependency on the teacher and they establish a working vocabulary between teacher and students.

**Exposure** (This is the very beginning of the group activity in Spolin's system. It is crucial. The following is from pages 51-53 of *Improvisation for the Theater*.)

Divide the total group into halves. Send one half to stand in a single line across the stage, while the other remains in the audience. Each group—audience and on stage—is to observe the

other. Coach: "You look at us. We'll look at you." Those on stage will soon become uncomfortable. Some will giggle and shift from foot to foot; others will freeze in position or try to appear nonchalant. If the audience starts to laugh, stop them. Just keep coaching: "You look at us. We'll look at you."

When each person on stage has shown some degree of discomfort, give the group that is standing a task to accomplish. Counting is a useful activity, since it requires focus. Tell them to count the floorboards or the seats in the auditorium. They are to keep counting until you tell them to stop, even if they have to count the same things over. Keep them counting until their discomfort is gone and they show bodily relaxation. . . .

When the initial discomfort has disappeared and they have become absorbed in what they are doing, reverse the groups: the audience is now on stage, and the actors have become the audience. Handle the second group just as you did the first. Do not tell them that you will give them anything to do. The direction to count (or whatever is useful) should be given only after they too have become uncomfortable.

*Exposure Group Evaluation*

When both groups have been on stage, instruct all the students to return to the audience. Now question the whole group about the experience they have just had. *Be careful not to put words into their mouths.* Let them discover for themselves how they felt. Discuss each part of the exercise separately.

*How did you feel when you were first standing on stage?*

There will be few answers at first. Some might say, "I felt self-conscious." . . . Such answers are generalities which indicate the student's resistance to the exposure he has just experienced. Try to break down the resistance. For instance, ask the audience:

*How did the actors look when they first stood on stage?*

The members of the audience will be quick to respond, since they will readily forget that they also were "the actors" themselves. . . .

Encourage the actors to describe their physical responses to their first experience on stage. It is far easier for them to say . . . "I felt out of breath" . . . than it is to admit "I was afraid." But you may not get even this physical description until you ask directly:

*How did your stomach feel?*

When these physical descriptions are flowing freely, then allow all the students to speak up in as much detail as they wish. . . . As

[the students'] concern about self-exposure subsides, they will speak about their muscular tensions almost with relief. There will always be a few who will remain resistant; but they will be influenced by the group's freedom in time and should not be singled out at the beginning.

Keep the discussion brief and on a group level. Steer them away from emotional responses. . . . If a student says, "I felt self-conscious," just reply: "I don't know what you mean—how did your shoulders feel?"

When the first part of the exercise has been fully discussed, then move on to the second part.

*How did you feel when you were counting the boards?*

Be careful not to refer to it as "when you had something to do." Let this realization come to each student in his own way. . . .

*What about the fluttering in your stomach?*
*What happened to your watery eyes?* . . .

The answer will be, "It went away"; and why it went away will soon become evident: "Because I had something to do."

And it is this "something to do" . . . that we call the actor's Point of Concentration. Quickly explain to your students that counting the boards (their "something to do") will be replaced by a different acting problem each time they do an exercise; and that this acting problem, this something-to-do, will be called their Point of Concentration.

The following exercises are just a sampling of the large number of sensory awareness games intended to establish the student's physical or sensory involvement with objects.

**Feeling Self with Self** (from page 56 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

Group remains seated in audience [or on floor].

Beginning with the bottoms of their feet, they are to feel what is against their bodies at each point. The feet feel the stockings, the shoes, and the floor beneath them; the legs feel the slacks or the stockings; the waist feels the belt; the finger feels the ring; . . . etc.

*Point of Concentration*: on feeling self with self.

*Side Coaching*: Feel self with self! Feel the feet in your shoes! . . . Feel the atmosphere around you! Reach out into the space! . . .

*Points of Observation*

1. Warn the students not to touch the parts with their hands but to feel with the various parts of their bodies.
2. Coach continuously throughout the exercise.
3. "Feeling" homework. Tell the students to take a moment each day to feel themselves pushing through the atmosphere while walking. Tell them to reach out into the atmosphere with the surface of their body. . . .

**Listening to the Environment** (from page 55 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

All are to sit quietly for one minute (perhaps with eyes shut) and listen to the sounds of the immediate environment. They then compare the sounds they heard. . . .

*Point of Concentration:* on hearing the sounds around them.

*Point of Observation*

Assign this exercise as homework, to be done a few minutes each day.

**Mirror Exercise #1** (from pages 60-61 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

Two players [the whole group may play in pairs].

A faces B. A is the mirror, and B initiates all movement. A reflects all B's activities and facial expressions. While looking into the mirror, B takes a simple activity such as washing or dressing. After a time, reverse the roles. . . .

*Point of Concentration:* exact mirror reflections of the initiator's movements, from head to foot.

*Side Coaching:* Follow the movements exactly! Keep your actions exact! Be a mirror!

*Points of Observation*

This exercise can give you a quick index into each student's natural sense of play, clowning, inventiveness, ability to create tension, and timing. Look for:

In A (mirror)
1. body alertness
2. accuracy of observation (attentiveness)
3. ability to stay with B and not make assumptions [about what B will do next] . . .
4. ability to provide true reflection . . .

In B (initiator of activity)
1. inventiveness . . .
2. exhibitionism (does he joke to get audience laughing?)
3. humor (does he "fool" the mirror and alter actions?)
4. variation (does he, without coaching, change movement rhythms?)

Have student-actors use this exercise without telling their audience which one of the two is the mirror. This effort to confound the audience demands a heightened concentration and produces a more intense involvement with the problem and each other. This is an early step in breaking down the walls between actor and actor and actor and audience.

**Disobeying Hands** [This is not one of Spolin's exercises; it is paraphrased from Sonia Moore's *Training an Actor* (Viking Press, 1968, page 6), a book on the Stanislavski Method. It is used very early to train students in concentration. And it is a dandy—try it yourself.]

Extend your right arm forward at shoulder height. Then move it straight up, then out to the side, then down at your side, then forward again. Do the same with your left arm—*but one beat later*. When your right arm goes up, your left comes forward; when the right goes to the side, the left goes up; and so on.

When that is mastered, do the exercise while walking around the room.

**Heavy** [This is sort of a combination of Spolin's "random walk" exercise (page 221) and one of Richard de Mille's "children's imagination games" from *Put Your Mother on the Ceiling* (Viking Press, 1973, pages 154-156). It is an excellent game for loosening up a group, though perhaps Spolin herself might not strictly approve of it.]

*Procedure*

Start the students walking around the room or stage, each "in his own orbit." After a while, begin the side coaching, as below, leaving plenty of time between commands. Most students will soon fall into pantomiming the suggested actions (though they do not have to); some will begin to "grunt and sweat," some will begin to work together, with or without verbal interplay. Everyone will be a little bewildered at the first, very involved by the end.

*Side Coaching*: Let's imagine you are walking down the street. There's a penny on the ground. Lean down and pick up the pen-

ny./ Throw it over your shoulder./ Pick up a baseball. Throw it over your shoulder./ Pick up a watermelon and throw it over your shoulder./ Hear it smash on the street./ Look back at the mess./ Now pick up that suitcase and throw it over your shoulder./ Pick up the horse there at the curb./ Throw *it* over your shoulder./ Pick up that Cadillac./ Throw it over your shoulder./ Careful! You almost hit someone with the Cadillac!/ Pick up that bus and throw it over your shoulder./

Walk up to the front door of the bank building. It's ten stories tall./ Look up at it./ Grab the handles on the bank building's front door./ Pick up the whole building by the handles./ Throw it over your shoulder./ What a racket!/ It was about to be torn down anyway./

Now there's a little dog./ Try to pick him up./ Have him be too heavy to pick up./ Have two people try to pick up the dog./ Still too heavy./ Have a big piece of machinery try to pick up the dog, but have the dog too heavy./ Now, you pick up the dog./ Have him kiss you./

Now pick up a politician with your left hand./ Walk around with him over your head./ Have him start to give a speech./ Watch him float off into the sky like a balloon./ Wave goodbye to him./

What would you like to pick up now? All right, do it./ What now?/ All right.

Stop now./ What was the name of this game?

*Points of Observation*

As in many orientation games, there is in this one no distinction between actor and audience, making the whole situation less threatening and making it likelier that the student will let himself go. It will also give you a chance to observe who is hung up on literalism ("I can't pick up a car"), who is particularly inventive, and who is given excessively to clowning. Unlike almost all the other games described here, this one, because of the elements of surprise and "story" in it, can be used only once.

**How Old Am I?** [This is a variation on a game to be found on pages 68-69 of Spolin's book. The wording is Alan Engelsman's, from James Hoetker and Alan Engelsman, *Drama* (A Scholastic Literature Unit, Scholastic Book Services, 1973, page 35).]

*Procedure*

Prepare in advance a box with 30 to 40 slips of paper, each with a specific age written on it. The ages should cover the range from about 6 to 90 (with the teens omitted if you are dealing with secondary school students). Ask for four volunteers to pick out a slip of paper and then sit on a bench in front of the rest of the

class. Each volunteer is to concentrate on *being* the age on the slip he has drawn. Provide constant side coaching. Afterwards, let the spectators guess the ages of the performers. Repeat the process with additional volunteers.

*Side Coaching*: You are waiting at a bus stop. Know how old you are. Concentrate on your age. Feel your age in your legs. In your calves and thighs. Feel how the blood moves through your body at your age. Feel the age in your shoulders. In your arms, hands, fingertips. Think of how a person your age breathes. Feel the age in your neck. The bus is late; how does a person your age feel about its being late? Feel the age in your eyes. . . . The bus is a block and a half away. Get out your change as a person your age would. It's a half block away. Here it is. Stand up and get on the bus.

[Similarly, a game might set the problem of communicating occupations rather than ages. Or, more demandingly, of communicating both age and occupation at once. In any case, at this stage, the game would not allow dialogue, though you might try allowing the players to use gibberish. When the audience has guessed the player's age, occupation, etc., ask, "How did you know?" "What did you *see* that communicated the information?"]

The sampling of orientation or warmup exercises might extend to ten times the number of pages I have to work with and still would not fairly represent the number and range of such games available. In any case, shortly after a teacher begins working with drama, he will begin to make his own variations on games he has learned from books and workshops and to invent his own games. I hope the sampling above whets the reader's appetite to learn more and gives the reader an idea of the sorts of experiences that should precede attempts at scene improvisation. Similarly, the sampling of improvisational games in the next section is illustrative only, but it should give an idea of the sorts of experiences that should precede attempts to work from scripts or to adapt stories, poems, etc., to dramatic form.

## Improvisational Games

**Who Game** (from page 109 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

Two players.

A seated on stage. B enters. B has pre-planned definite character relationship with A but has not told him what it is. By the way B relates to A, A must discover Who he (A) is. When players have finished, reverse the scene, with B on stage and A choosing relationship.

*Point of Concentration*: to communicate relationship (Who) without telling a story; to find out Who you are (A); to show Who, the relationship (B).

*Example*: A (girl) is seated on bench. B (girl) enters. B: "Hello, darling. How are you?" B starts fussing over A's hair. She then walks around A, looking her over most critically. B asks A to stand up. A does so. B turns her around, making clicking sounds. B: "You look beautiful, darling; just beautiful!" B then puts her arms around A with great tenderness and rocks her back and forth. She stops, wipes a tear away, then hurriedly gets busy fussing with A again. She handles what looks like yards and yards of a bouffant skirt. . . . When A knows she is the daughter and this is in preparation for her wedding, she enters into the relationship.

*Evaluation*

Did B show the relationship or tell?

*Points of Observation*

1. This is one of the early steps in the direct handling of character relationship and should be repeated throughout the training period. . . .
2. The exercise can end the moment the problem is solved—when the relationship is known—or can continue. Sometimes an interesting involvement takes place and much can be gained by continuing.

**Who's Knocking** (Paraphrased from page 110 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

One player is out of audience's sight (outside the room, behind a portable blackboard, etc.). The player is to have preplanned a Who, Where, and What. He is to knock on the door or blackboard in such a way as to communicate as much of this information to the audience as possible.

This game is an excellent stimulus for a writing assignment. Let each student decide for himself who is knocking, why, when, where, and so on, and then write a brief description of the circumstances. Share the impressions by reading them aloud; compare them with one another and with the actor's intentions.

**Relating Character to Objects** [The next two improvisation games are adapted from page 22 of the *Course Guide* of the Secondary School Theatre Conference of the American Educational Theatre Association (Revised Edition, AETA, 1968).]

(A) Bring to class a nondescript object such as a stuffed sack, a piece of wood, a rolled-up old shirt. Relate to the object as if it

were, say, a pet animal, a small baby, an heirloom of great value, or a very delicate piece of crockery. A character and a setting should evolve from the relationship.

*Questions for the Audience*

1. Can you identify the object easily?
2. Does a character evolve because of the actor-object relationship? Describe the character.
3. Describe the setting in which you see the character and the object.

(B) Bring to class an unusual object—one that has a distinctive character. An odd hat, for instance, a crowbar, a rubber duck, a piece of souvenir junk, an out-of-the-ordinary kitchen utensil. Using the object as your motivation, create a character, a place, and a reason for being there (Spolin's Who, Where, and What).

*Questions for the Audience*

1. Are the character and place clearly established?
2. As a result of relating the prop and a character, does something happen?

**Wandering Speech** (adapted from page 182 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

Two players.

Where and Who agreed on. One person is delayed from completing an activity because of the chattiness of the other person, who keeps talking, changing the subject, and digressing. Reverse so that both players have a chance at chatty role.

*Point of Concentration*: to unintentionally digress from completing the desired activity through random speech.

Examples: Who—customer and chatty salesman. Where—department store. What—customer wants to buy present for wife (or husband) and has much more shopping to do. Customer in a hurry, salesperson keeps talking.

*Points of Observation*

1. Hostility is not part of this exercise. The chatty person is not deliberately setting up an obstacle; the digressions are innocent, friendly ones.
2. If the Point of Concentration is held, a great deal of humor can develop. Useful for developing material for scenes.

(This, obviously, is a pretty demanding game—it would have to be—and in Spolin's book is preceded by a good deal of developmental work with gibberish and improvised scenes involving speech.)

I want to use most of the space I have left to describe one rather elaborate application of Spolin's theater games techniques to the teaching of a piece of literature.

## Classroom Application

One fairly elaborate, detailed example seems better here than a series of brief ones (with which the literature is replete at any rate). The rest of this section describes a way of getting a whole class involved in Antony's funeral oration from *Julius Caesar*. The lesson described is a development from one to be found in *Drama: Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar"* by Alan Engelsman and myself (A Scholastic Literature Unit, Scholastic Book Services, 1973).

A mob scene such as this one is in some ways the ideal vehicle by means of which to move from improvised drama into scripted drama or dramatizations from literature. Such a scene is invariably exciting; everyone can take part and do something important and creative. With everyone involved, there will be no audience to create anxiety. The script or story provides the object and the Point of Concentration. Spolin and Way each have some helpful remarks on orchestrating mob scenes and using them (see *Improvisation for the Theater*, pages 166-167, 239, and elsewhere; *Development through Drama*, pages 134-137, 282, and elsewhere). The following lesson borrows from both sources.

### Antony's Funeral Oration

The class has had some small experience with theater games, will be familiar with the whole story of *Julius Caesar*, and will already have worked dramatically with several scenes. A special prompt script has been prepared containing some additional stage directions and "ad libs" for the four citizens who voice the mob's reactions to Brutus and Antony. These additions are to provide students with guidance toward creating the sorts of supplementary dialogue that a playwright trusts his actors to develop. (Spolin remarks on page 167 of her book: "The director . . . should never have individuals in mobs make incoherent sounds. They should all speak and shout full meaningful remarks.")

The class is divided into four groups of about the same size. Each group lines up in a file, everyone facing the teacher. The first

student in each file is the leader—these four will later play the roles of the four citizens. The students first are asked to sound off ("One," "Two," "Three," and so on down the lines), each person turning, establishing eye contact with the person behind him, and speaking out his number loud and clear. (The purpose of this and the immediately following exercises is simply to get each of the four groups used to working together and in the properly playful-but-purposeful frame of mind.)

The students are then asked to pass back a number in the same way—eye-contact, loud and clear delivery. When the last person in a file has spoken the number, everyone else in his group shouts it out together. This may be done as a contest, to see which group can get the number down the line fastest.

Then take another number, pass it down the line in the same way but with an emotion added. Say something like: "Take 236. You are overjoyed about 236. Deliriously happy. Pass 236 down the line with that emotion in your voice." This is done several times, with several contrasting emotions and different numbers. For variety, the names of the emotions themselves may be substituted for numbers, for example, "Pass 'sadly' down the line sadly."

Next involve the students in ad-libbing in gibberish. Have the four groups separate, each student finding a partner from within his group (groups of three are all right, if there are uneven numbers). Ask each student to decide how his name would be pronounced backwards. Have each student introduce himself to his partner by his backwards name. Each pair should then begin a gibberish conversation that will slowly evolve into a heated argument. At signals from you, pairs of students will join in groups of four, then six, and so on until each of the four groups is engaged in a gibberish argument within itself. Side coach: "Keep the talk going! Don't let it lag! Don't wait for the other person to stop talking! Shout right over him! Make him hear you!"

Stop this abruptly, while excitement and noise are still on the upgrade. Bring the four groups back facing you, but still separate from one another. Announce that the students are delegates to an Interplanetary Political Convention where the official language is Martian (i.e., gibberish).

Assign each of the four groups an attitude to be held toward you, the next speaker at the convention. (Two might be hostile, for instance, one supportive, one changeable.) The members of each group are to take their cues from their leader, verbally and physically echoing and elaborating on his remarks. Since it's all in gibberish it will be each leader's feeling-tone that his group will be reinforcing.

Begin to speak, yell, harangue; be as emotional as possible; address the groups separately; encourage your supporters to react to your opponents. It is remarkable how really involved and excited this game can get people (and how good it makes them feel, afterwards). If someone volunteers, or if you can identify a student who has been especially forceful in earlier games, ask that person to be the next speaker. Repeat, with each group assigned a different attitude to the speaker.

Everyone should be ready now. Stop and briefly outline the situation in which Antony's oration takes place and the dramatic problems it offers. Then give to the four group-leaders only copies of the four specially prepared scripts.

Note that what is important about the mob's reactions is that within a relatively short time, in response to Antony's words, they change from open hostility to passionate support. The Point of Concentration will be to make this abrupt transition natural and credible.

Have each group leader take his group aside and rehearse with them. The leader's job will be to pick up his cues immediately; his group's job is to pick up at once on their leader's remarks and movements and reinforce them by repeating his words, rephrasing them, encouraging him ("Yeah! Yeah!" "You tell 'em!"). Each group will have to work particularly hard at avoiding long-delayed or choral responses.

Call the four groups together and, reading the parts of Brutus and Antony yourself, run through the scene as far as the part where the mob demands to hear Caesar's will. Tape record this first run-through, then play it back and evaluate it. Common difficulties will be missed or late cues; reluctance to speak while Antony is speaking; hesitant, artificial, over-enthusiastic responses; and clowning.

Play through the scene again, from the beginning. Then, when the crowd is ready, turn over the parts of Brutus and Antony to students who have been notified earlier, have rehearsed their parts with you, and have had a chance to observe and/or participate in the working up of the mob scene. Have the student-actors read Brutus's and Antony's parts from copies of the play that do not have the additions in the special scripts—this will encourage them to work with the mob and will prevent such lapses as Antony's pausing for a citizen to sneer at or cheer one of his remarks. Play it through again—and again—until it works. Tape record each version and play back the one with which the students are finally satisfied. You might compare the students' production with one on a commercial recording of *Julius Caesar*; chances are the students will find their own superior.

Discuss, then, what the students have learned about (1) drama and (2) Antony. The actor playing Antony will almost invariably testify that he was surprised by his own performance each time he read the oration, the details of which were in part spontaneous reactions to the mob's behavior. Everyone will have found that he has had a great deal of fun and excitement with—of all people—Shakespeare.

Rather than end with some sort of formal summation—which a brief, discursive paper like this one probably doesn't warrant—let me rather present one more of Spolin's theater games. This game presents problems so subtle as to be quite beyond solution by actors who have not been through the preceding exercises or their equivalents. Let Spolin's expectations that student-actors will be able to cope with this game stand as testimony to the effectiveness of theater games as a system of instruction.

**Physical Irritation** (from pages 267-268 of *Improvisation for the Theater*)

Two players.

Players portray an encounter where one person is under close scrutiny by the other and must cover up an embarrassing blemish.

*Examples*: A is being interviewed for a job by, or having a business meeting with, B. A has a spot on his tie, or he has beer on his breath, etc. . . .

*Point of Concentration*: concealing the problem during the interview.

# Additional Sources and References

Viola Spolin has recently elaborated the system set forth in her book in a "theater game file" format for use by teachers. Although specifically intended for elementary students, the games may be easily adapted for use in upper grades and in teacher-training programs. For information about the Spolin *Theater Game File* (1975), inquire of Sharon Bocklage, CEMREL, Inc., 3120 59th Street, Saint Louis, Missouri 63139.

Also available for classroom use is a series of 26 "Story Theater" films illustrating the Spolin-Sills approach to improvisational theater. Information about these films may be obtained from the Spolin Theater Game Center, c/o Samuel W. Murdoch, P.O. Box 3883, Hollywood, California 90028.

Another excellent and thorough introduction to drama is Brian Way's *Development through Drama* (Humanities Press, 1967; originally published in England by Longman). Way's book is almost as concrete in its particulars as Spolin's, and it deals very helpfully with some aspects of drama with which Spolin is little concerned—constructive ways to handle fighting and violence in improvisations, for instance. Way's approach differs from Spolin's especially in that it is avowedly non-systematic, in that it does not rule out playwriting and storytelling, in that it pays more attention to "literary" matters, and in that it is much concerned with general educational applications of drama. (The same sorts of differences, in a very rough way, would distinguish most writers on creative dramatics from Spolin.)

Also excellent is Gabriel Barnfield's *Creative Drama in Schools* (Macmillan, 1971.) It is another "teaching" book, very concrete, which stresses physical movement, dance, and the technical aspects of amateur theater more than either Spolin or Way. The new second edition of Nellie McCaslin's *Creative Dramatics in the Classroom* (David McKay, 1974) is helpful in a general way but is far from being a step-by-step guide for the teacher who needs one. It does, however, have an excellent, up-to-date bibliography of books and pamphlets on drama and related arts and a list of films "for use in teaching dramatics."

Two recent books addressed to language arts teachers that are worth special attention are John W. Stewig's *Spontaneous Drama: A Language Art* (Charles E. Merrill, 1973) and Charles R. Duke's *Creative Dramatics in the Teaching of English* (NCTE, 1974). Both of these books contain up-to-date lists of references and sources of information and materials.

The Scholastic Literature Units on *Drama* and *Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar"* (both 1973), done by Alan Engelsman and James Hoetker, are basically applications of Spolin's and Way's ideas to the teaching of specific play-reading and critical skills, and may serve as examples of how improvisational drama can help attain the traditional objectives of the literature classroom.

A number of sources of information on drama are available from the National Council of Teachers of English. The *Creative Dramatics Handbook*, edited by Harriet W. Ehrlich, is published by the School District of Philadelphia and is distributed by NCTE. Building on children's love of play-pretend, Philadelphia teachers have developed an affective curriculum by incorporating creative dramatics into the regular classroom day. The hundreds of suggestions in the handbook emerged from workshops held over the years to train teachers in creative dramatics.

In *Drama: What Is Happening* (NCTE, 1967), James Moffet stresses the central role of drama and speech in a language curriculum and argues that dramatic interaction is the primary vehicle for developing thought and language. And James Hoetker, in *Dramatics and the Teaching of Literature* (NCTE/ERIC, 1969), examines the use of drama in the teaching of literature in British and American schools.